



**ROBERT B. TAYLOR**  
Chief Probation Officer

## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT


9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY — DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242

(562) 940-2501



February 20, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM:   
Robert B. Taylor  
Chief Probation Officer

**SUBJECT: CAMP SCUDDER DISTURBANCE OF FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

On February 5, 2009, there was a major disturbance at Camp Scudder, one of two female camps in Santa Clarita, that resulted in two youth and eight staff sustaining injuries. On February 10, 2009, on motion of Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, the Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Probation Officer to report back within 14 days on what happened at Camp Scudder on February 5, 2009, and what is being done to prevent these types of disturbances. This report provides 1) a general chronology of the events that occurred, and 2) a preliminary Corrective Action Plan (CAP) that is underway in an effort to mitigate such reoccurrences.

### **Precipitating Event**

On February 5, 2009, at approximately 5:40 p.m., during the evening meal period, a disturbance occurred in the dining hall. As reported by Camp Scudder staff:

- Three youth created the disturbance by throwing cups and a pitcher of water.
- The youth involved were two Hispanic youth and one African American minor from differing gangs – these three youth were immediately removed to the Special Handling Unit.
- The evening meal was completed without further incident.

### **Major Disturbance**

At approximately 8:30 p.m., during the shower period, a disturbance occurred in the dorm involving 33 youth.

- Two youth, a Hispanic and African American, began arguing and staff responded immediately to the area to diffuse the argument.
- The staff's intervention failed, and the two youth started exchanging punches.
- Six other Hispanic youth then left their bed area to engage in the fight.
- Five other African American youth then left their bed area and joined the fight.
- Staff responding to emergency panic alarm were able to isolate the group of Hispanic youth from African American youth within the building.
- Pregnant youth and youth not involved were removed from the dorm to safety.
- A total of twelve (12) Camp Scudder staff and five (5) Camp Scott staff assisted in quelling the disturbance.
- Order seemed to be restored by the segregation of the youth.
- Hispanic youth then reengaged and the disorder resumed.
- At approximately 9:06 p.m., order in the dorm was reestablished.
- A total of twenty-three (23) involved youth were removed from the facility. Eighteen (18) youth were transported to Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and Five (5) youth were transported to the Camp Scott Special Handling Unit without further incident.

### **Immediate Action Taken**

1. Temporarily, currently capping the Camp Scudder juvenile population at 30. On February 5, 2009, there were 58 youth.
2. Utilizing other Deputy Probation Officers on an overtime basis to provide a safe and secure setting.
3. 602 WIC and 777 WIC petitions have been filed with the Court on each identified participant.

### **Preliminary Corrective Action Plan to Mitigate Future Incidents**

Camp Scudder has started the implementation of Camp Redesign and will continue to deliver the required programming and services to camp youth. Various program interventions will continue to be added as part of Camp Redesign to ensure additional

participation of camp youth. However, as a result of this disturbance, the following actions are necessary to mitigate these types of reoccurrences.

1. Fill all vacancies at Camp Scudder in an effort to stabilize the culture and staffing level.
2. Provide booster training to all Camp Scudder staff on basic supervision and major disturbance prevention.
3. Provide training to Camp Scudder staff that will advance their skill set in managing youth with mental health needs.
4. Immediately modified or suspend all activities, if any precipitating event occurs which jeopardize the safety and welfare of youth and staff.
5. Implement a cultural and racial sensitivity curriculum for youth.
6. Train Camp Scudder staff that has not yet been trained in Core Correctional Practices (CCP) and Motivational Interviewing (MI).
7. Train remaining Camp Scudder SDPOs in Advancing the Skill Sets and Interaction Styles of the Security and Support Team (ASSISST), a 12-module curriculum designed for line supervisors to teach their probation staff on effective communication with youth, modeling de-escalation, and effective rule enforcement. Several Camp Scott SDPOs attended the first ASSISST training session on February 11-13.
8. Continue to advocate for hiring of a permanent nurse for Camp Scott, thereby, decentralizing dispensing of psychotropic medication to both female camps. We anticipate the February 10, 2009 Board-approved motion related to enhancing nursing coverage at Camp Scott will address this issue.
9. Fully implement the EBP interventions by training staff to facilitate small groups in:
  - Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARRCS) – facilitator training by TRC scheduled for February 23-24 and April 20-21;
  - Teaching Pro-Social Skills (TPS) – additional facilitator training by TRC scheduled for April 6-7.

Due to the fact that many of the staff involved in this disturbance are out on industrial injuries, statements from all staff have not yet been obtained. Consequently, the investigation is pending completion and will be completed by Probation's Child Abuse Special Investigation Unit by March 7, 2009.

**Final Corrective Action Plan**

We anticipate finalizing our CAP within two weeks of the completion of the investigation. In the meantime, we will provide your Board with any additional pertinent information as it becomes available. The Chief Executive Office has reviewed this report.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information, or your staff my contact Dave Mitchell, Bureau Chief, Residential Treatment Services, at (562) 940-2508.

RBT:DM:ar

c: Honorable Michael Nash, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court  
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
William T. Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Doyle Campbell, Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
Raymond G. Fortner, Jr., County Counsel  
Justice Deputies